

# HEPATITIS B ..... CAN ..... BE ..... PREVENTED!



## **Hepatitis B**

- ☞ is a disease of the liver
- ☞ is found in blood and body fluids and can be spread by:
  - sexual contact
  - sharing drug needles
  - a mother to her newborn
  - sharing razors and toothbrushes
- ☞ is commonly spread to children whose parents have hepatitis B and among sexually active teenagers, people who “shoot up” drugs, and gay men
- ☞ can remain in the blood of a sick person for many years, and cause cancer, cirrhosis, and even death
- ☞ is not spread through food, water, or casual contact



## **Signs and Symptoms**

- fatigue
  - mild fever
  - flu-like illness
  - nausea and vomiting
  - stomach ache
  - loss of appetite
- ☞ Some people have:
- no symptoms at all
  - yellow eyes and skin (jaundice)
  - dark urine
  - light-colored stool

## **Treatment**

- doctor visit
  - rest
  - plenty of liquids
  - no beer, wine, or liquor
  - no “pot” or other drugs
- ☞ Antibiotics do not help because hepatitis B is caused by a virus. If your illness does not go away, see your doctor. A medicine called interferon may help.

## **Prevention**

- ☞ Limit your sex partners to one and always use a condom if you or your partner have sex with others.
- ☞ Never share needles used to “shoot up” drugs.
- ☞ Get your blood tested if you:
  - are pregnant
  - live, have sex, or share drug needles with someone who has hepatitis B
- ☞ Ask your doctor about hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) if you are exposed.
- ☞ Get the vaccine. Starting at birth, all children should be immunized against hepatitis B. Each person needs three shots. You should get the vaccine if you:
  - have more than one sex partner
  - “shoot up” drugs or have a sex partner who does
  - live or have sex with someone who has hepatitis B